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(Provisional Agenda item 6(a))

COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT

(Commission decision G (48))

Report by the Executive Secretary

1. This report has been prepared in response to paragraph 19 of decision G (48).

2. The secretariat continued to participate in the preparations for the second Pan-European Transport Conference, which is scheduled to take place in Crete from 14 to 16 March 1994 at the invitation of the Government of Greece. The secretariat will play an active role in the Conference with a view to covering the priority areas of ECE work in the field of transport.

3. The secretariat provided a substantive contribution to the elaboration of the Draft Declaration to be issued by the Conference. When dealing with a number of important elements of all-European transport policy, the Draft Declaration refers to the work of ECE in the field of transport, including ECE international agreements and conventions.

4. The feasibility of organizing a regional conference on transport and the environment was discussed by the Inland Transport Committee on the basis of a preliminary note prepared by the secretariat. While supporting in principle the concept of organizing such a conference as a follow-up to UNCED Agenda 21, the Committee felt that further consideration should be given, inter alia, to the results which might be expected in the various areas to be dealt with by the conference. For this purpose, the Committee approved the setting up as

soon as possible of an informal ad hoc group to help the secretariat to prepare detailed recommendations on the concept, scope, the specific topics, the output and the organization of a conference. The views of the group are reflected in the Executive Secretary's report on the feasibility of organizing such a conference, which is contained in document E/ECE/1299.

5. Preparatory work for the second Road Safety Week, to be held in the ECE region from 27 March to 2 April 1995, continued. Preparations included the elaboration of the programme and modalities for the event providing detailed recommendations as to action, including publicity campaigns, to be taken by Governments, international organizations and the secretariat. An ECE seminar on Safety of Young Drivers was held in Tel-Aviv (Israel) in October 1993.

6. The revision of the provisions concerning the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN) was completed. However, no consensus has been reached so far on whether or not such technical provisions should be annexed to a legally binding agreement, similar to the ADR, to replace the existing Resolution no. 223 of the Inland Transport Committee which is of a recommendatory nature.

7. The number of Contracting Parties to the ECE Agreements and Conventions in the field of transport continued to increase. In the last twelve months, a total of 23 States, including one non-ECE member State, became Contracting Parties to ECE legal instrume.ts. The increase in the number of Contracting Parties concerned a total of 31 ECE legal instruments. Most of the new Contracting Parties were ECE member States from central and eastern Europe, particularly newly independent states. The importance of this development for the achievement of a coherent efficient transport system in the ECE region was underlined and States which had not yet become contracting parties to the ECE legal instruments in the field of transport were invited to do so as soon as possible.

8. The importance of the further development of the TEM and TER projects continued to be underlined by the participating Governments which renewed their support for the projects. The TEM and TER networks continued to be adapted to the new situation in the region by including east-west connections. The construction of a coherent TEM motorway network continued to be the final objective. In view of the present financial constraints, however, the TEM Governments continued to consider the construction by stages and the upgrading of the existing non-motorway TEM sections. A study providing indications of priorities for such upgrading was finalized. A further study updating the traffic forecasts on the TEM network should be finalized in 1994. In the field of rail transport, upgrading the existing TER infrastructure and development of combined transport continued to be the main objectives for the TER Governments.

9. The activities of both TEM and TER projects continued to be funded through the respective ECE Trust Funds to which so far only the participating Governments have contributed, in spite of repeated requests for external contributions. UNDP still funded some TER activities in 1993 but its involvement ceased at the end of that year. The secretariat continued to provide technical and administrative support to both projects and, with a view to their further development, cooperated closely with the Commission of the European Communities, the ECMT and, in the framework of the G-24, with donor countries and international financial institutions in the identification of

the highest priority projects within the TEM and TER networks for possible financing.

10. With regard to the incorporation of provisions on inland water transport using combined transport techniques into a legally binding international instrument, contained in Resolution no. 240 of the Inland Transport Committee, a consensus could not be reached on the modality of such an instrument, although there seemed to be support for a separate legal instrument.

11. A study to identify bottlenecks and missing links in the international infrastructure networks was carried out. Its results should be taken into account in the upgrading of the international road, rail and combined transport networks established in the relevant ECE infrastructure agreements. Another study is under way to adopt common criteria for the definition of bottlenecks, missing links and the quality of service of infrastructure networks.

12. With a view to promoting further an intermodal approach to transport infrastructures, the modifications introduced in the international road, rail and combined transport networks laid down in the relevant ECE agreements and projects will be compiled into a document to be prepared annually. Amendments to the various ECE infrastructure agreements (the AGR for road, the AGC for rail and the AGTC for combined transport) were already under consideration in the light of the new political and transport situation in central and eastern Europe. The AGR agreement incorporated the need to take into account the environmental impact assessment of infrastructure projects. With a view to monitoring the implementation of the AGR, an inventory of the existing infrastructure parameters of the E-road network will be undertaken every two/three years. Such an inventory concerning the AGTC parameters was published in 1993. The respective networks laid down in the three ECE infrastructure agreements were being amended mainly to include the international networks of the new member states and to reflect new east-west traffic flows. The AGTC entered into force on 20 October 1993 after ratification by 8 ECE member States. A European infrastructure agreement concerning inland water transport (AGN) continues to be under study.

13. The revision of the 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions of Approval and Reciprocal Recognition of Approval for Motor Vehicle Equipment and Parts with a view to streamlining its procedures and to its worldwide application was expected to be finalized in March 1994.

14. The legal procedure governing the entry into force of the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals and the 1971 European Agreement supplementing it was under way.

15. In accordance with Resolution no. 241 of the Inland Transport Committee, all developments in container dimensions were being monitored by the Working Party on Combined Transport in order to advise ECE member Governments, if necessary, on appropriate policy action.

16. The eighth revision of the UN/ECOSOC Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods was published in 1993. These multimodal recomendations have been reflected in all modal international agreements or recommendations such as ADR for road transport, RID for rail, ADN for inland water, IMDG Code for

sea transport and ICAO Technical Instructions as well as IATA Regulations for air transport.

17. The European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) continued to be amended so as to follow the UN Recommendations and to incorporate the latest technological developments in road transport. A new version of the ADR containing the amendments adopted in 1992 and 1993 will be published in 1994. Following the intention of the Commission of the European Community to apply ADR to all transport of dangerous goods by road within the Union, which would recognize the ADR as the sole reference in Europe for such transport, work on the restructuring the annexes of ADR is under way. A Conference of the Contracting Parties, convened in October 1993, adopted a Protocol amending the definition of vehicles and the procedure for amendments to the annexes.

18. The Committee proposed to the Commission that it hold its fifty-seventh session from 16 to 20 January 1995.

19. Measures were taken with a view to filling the vacant posts in the Transport Division. The P-3 posts in the unit of transport statistics and transport of dangerous goods respectively have been filled. Candidates selected through normal competitive examinations for the P-3 post for the construction of vehicles and the P-2 post for the transport of dangerous goods will be submitted to ECE in the course of 1994. In the meantime both posts are filled on a temporary basis. The vacant P-5 post in the Technology Section was announced in January 1994 and should be filled in the coming months. The P-4 post in the Facilitation section will be advertised soon and should be filled in 1994.